

CONFIDENTIAL

STATSPEC

REGULATION

October 1950

SUBJECT: Publication of Libelous, Slandorous, and Censorious Material.

1. General

STATSPEC

- a. This regulation sets forth [REDACTED] policy and procedures regarding the publication of libelous, slanderous, and censorious material.

2. Definitions

a. Libelous or slanderous material

Libelous or slanderous material includes any defamatory attack on the character, personality, or conduct of an individual, but does not include criticism of his policies, views, or philosophy.

b. Censorious material

Censorious material includes any criticism of the policies, views, or philosophy of an individual, short of defamatory attacks on his character or personal conduct.

c. Public figures and officials

Public figures and officials include all persons prominent in the public eye, and all U.S. Government officials and employees.

d. Private citizens

Private citizens include all persons not prominent in the public eye and not in the service of the U.S. Government.

e. Publication

Publication includes reproduction and dissemination by means of [REDACTED]

STATSPEC

- 2 -

(1st Alternative) D-E-A-T-T

3. Policy

a. Attacks on public figures or officials

- (1) Material that is either libelous or slanderous or merely censorious concerning public figures or officials may, except as stated in (2) below, be published without restriction, i.e. in the "White Book" which goes to the press and foreign embassies in Washington.
- (2) Special handling will, however, be given in the case of material that, in the judgment of the editor, seriously exceeds the bounds of slanderous vituperation normally expected from the communist or clandestine radios. Exceptionally vicious, obscene, or abusive personal attacks on public figures will be withheld from publication and brought to the attention of the Branch Chief, at whose discretion they may be submitted to the [REDACTED] for a decision as to whether they should be published under "Official Use Only" control or given special dissemination to consumers on a need to know basis.

STATSPEC

b. Attacks on private citizens

- (1) Material that is merely censorious concerning private citizens, may be published without restriction.
- (2) Libelous or slanderous material concerning private citizens may be published only with the approval of the [REDACTED] or his designated deputy and must be designated "Official Use Only."

STATSPEC

STATSPEC

(2nd Alternative) D-R-A-F-T

3. Policy

- a. Censorious material may be published without restriction in accordance with normal editorial procedures.
- b. Libelous or slanderous attacks on public figures and officials will
 - (1) be published only with the approval of the [REDACTED] or his designated deputy;
 - (2) if published, be designated "Official Use Only."
- c. When private individuals are the subject of a libelous or slanderous discussion, such material will not be published but may, with the approval of the [REDACTED] be distributed to consumers on a need-to-know basis.

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